Presents

The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest

A Weekend of Workshops, Lectures and Panel Discussions Exploring “The Art of Narrative Storytelling”

5:30 P.M. FRIDAY, JULY 22 TO 3:45 P.M. SUNDAY, JULY 24, 2005

COME JOIN US AT HILTON DFW LAKES, GRAPEVINE, TEXAS

To Celebrate the Mayborn Institute’s Literary Nonfiction Initiative

Norm Pearlstine
Time Inc.’s editor-in-chief. Lecture: “The future of literary journalism in magazine publishing.”

Ken Wells

Alex Kotlowitz
Author of There Are No Children Here. Lecture: “Writing about people on the margins.”

Paul Hendrickson
Author of Sons of Mississippi. Lecture: “How book projects find us, not we them.”

Deanne Stillman
Author of Twentynine Palms. Lecture: “The role of landscape in shaping narratives.”

Susan Orlean
Author of My Kind of Place. Lecture: “A guided tour of her literary adventures.”

Gary Lavergne
Author of Bad Boy. Lecture: “The art of telling true-crime stories.”
The Purpose of the Conference

The Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest, sponsored by the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, is designed to explore the art of narrative storytelling through a series of lectures, panel discussions, question and answer sessions, readings and workshops. Our conference is open to anyone – students, readers and the general public – interested in hearing from and speaking to some of the nation’s most acclaimed writers and editors working in this genre. The primary purpose of our conference is to provide a forum for journalists, writers, readers, students, educators and the general public to listen to, be inspired by and discuss literary nonfiction in all its forms. We are also offering instruction to anyone who wants to learn how to employ the literary techniques of fiction in various forms of nonfiction narration. We have brought together some of the nation’s top literary nonfiction writers and editors to help us lay the foundation for this unique program, one that we believe will be both enlightening and educational. Our conference authors and editors are current and former journalists who have learned how to transcend the traditional boundaries of journalism while upholding its highest standards for fairness and accuracy. They are, in short, practicing what we intend to teach: the art of factual narration.

Our Workshop Component

In addition to providing a forum to hear from and speak to our literary nonfiction authors and editors, our conference is providing another component: The opportunity for amateur and professional writers, students and journalists to elevate the literary quality of their writing. To this end, we are providing hands-on instruction in the art of literary nonfiction narration at two, three-hour-long workshops on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning. One is the Article/Essay Workshop; the other, the Manuscript Workshop. (See Conference Schedule below for the date and time of workshops).

For the Article/Essay Workshop, there is a $20 entry fee in addition to the conference registration fee. We will select the best 50 entrees from all the submissions to participate in this workshop. Three of the writers selected to participate in the workshop will win cash prizes at our Literary Lights reception Saturday evening.

For the Manuscript Workshop, there is a $50 entry fee in addition to the conference registration fee. We will select the best 20 entrees from all the submissions to participate in this workshop. The workshop leaders, along with a panel of jurists, will select the best manuscript based on literary quality and commercial potential. The University of North Texas Press will enter into a provisional contract with the writer to publish and market the manuscript upon completion. The writer should submit a first chapter, no more than 25 pages, along with a narrative synopsis of each chapter of the book to demonstrate that the writer has a well-conceived format for telling the entire saga.

Submissions to both workshops should be addressed to George Getschow, Conference Writer-in-Residence, The Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, P.O. Box 311460, Denton, Texas 76203-1460. All submissions must be postmarked no later than Friday, June 1, 2005. The
writer’s name, address and phone number should be put in the upper left corner of the first page of the material. Submissions should be paginated, double-spaced and set with one-inch margins. We recommend Times New Roman style, 12-point type. The submission should be unstapled and presented in a folder that may be easily opened for material removal for copying purposes.

About three weeks prior to the conference, writers selected for both workshops will receive in the mail a packet containing: 1) a letter of acceptance, which must be signed and returned to the Mayborn Institute, 2) copies of all workshop submissions, 3) critique sheets and instructions and 4) the time and location of the workshop to which the writer has been assigned.

Writers selected for the workshops are expected to carefully read all the submissions in the assigned workshop before coming to the conference. Each writer is expected to make written notations on the submissions and on the critique sheets. Each workshop participant will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the submissions with respect to clarity, comprehensiveness, creativity, the presence or lack of a narrative thread, vivid and concrete detail, anecdotes, metaphor, scene setting, dialogue and other literary devices used in writing the story.

There will be a maximum of 10 writers in each workshop, each headed by a workshop leader who will distribute workshop procedures. During the first half of the Saturday workshop, the workshop will critique five writers; during the second half of the workshop, another five writers will be critiqued. There will be a 10-minute break between the two sessions. Each workshop participant will read the first page of his or her submission. Then he or she will remain silent while the rest of the workshop members critique both the strengths and weaknesses of the piece, beginning with its strengths. Each member of the workshop is expected to participate in the discussion. After each workshop participant has offered his or her critique, the writer gets a chance to respond to what he or she has learned from the workshop evaluations. Each member of the workshop, including workshop leaders, will then hand over to the writer his or her written evaluation form. Each workshop participant is expected to write a one-page revision of his or her piece that will be read and critiqued at Sunday’s Revision Workshop.

### Pricing*

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* All Meals Included.
Our Lecturers and Workshop Leaders

Norman Pearlstine became editor-in-chief of Time Inc., the world's largest magazine publisher, on Jan. 1, 1995. He is the fifth editor-in-chief in the company's history. As editor-in-chief, Pearlstine oversees the editorial content of Time Inc.'s magazines, including TIME, Life, Fortune, Sports Illustrated, People, In Style, Money and Entertainment Weekly, to name a few. In addition to his editorial duties, he has overall business responsibilities for Time Inc.'s new media, international and television activities. Prior to joining Time Inc., Pearlstine was with Dow Jones & Co. from 1968 to 1992, except for a two-year period when he was an executive editor at Forbes magazine. He joined The Wall Street Journal as a staff reporter in its Dallas bureau in 1968 and subsequently worked as a reporter in Detroit and Los Angeles before being named the paper's Tokyo bureau chief in 1973. Pearlstine was named the first managing editor of The Asian Wall Street Journal in Hong Kong in March 1976. He returned to The Wall Street Journal from Forbes in the spring of 1980 as national news editor. In 1982 he was named editor and publisher of The Wall Street Journal Europe in Brussels. He was appointed managing editor of The Wall Street Journal in September 1983 and became executive editor in June 1991. He resigned from Dow Jones & Co. in June 1992. In April 1993 he was named general partner of Friday Holdings L.P., a multimedia investment company. Pearlstine was born in Philadelphia and raised in nearby Collegeville. He graduated from Haverford College in 1964 and the University of Pennsylvania Law School in 1967. In addition, he did postgraduate work at the law school of Southern Methodist University. Pearlstine is a member of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia and the American Bar Association. In 1989 he received the National Press Foundation's award as Editor of the Year. He currently serves as the president of the Atsuko Chiba Foundation, which supports Asian journalists who study in the United States. He is also a director of the New York Historical Society, the Sundance Institute and a member of the Council on Foreign Relations. He was recently inducted into the Magazine Editors' Hall of Fame.

Susan Orlean has been called “a national treasure” by the Washington Post and “a kind of latter-day Tocqueville” by The New York Times Book Review. Orlean had been writing articles for The New Yorker since 1982, becoming a staff writer in 1997. She has written more than 50 "Talk of the Town" pieces, as well as "Profiles and Reporter at Large" articles, and is currently writing a series of American popular culture columns called “Popular Chronicles.” The “Chronicles” thus far have included subjects such as an article on designer Bill Blass, Harlem high school basketball star Felipe Lopez, the friends and neighbors of Tonya Harding, and D.J. Red Alert, a hip-hop radio star in New York. Orlean has written several books, including, The Bullfighter Checks Her Makeup: My Encounters with Ordinary People, a collection of stories which was released in January 2001; Red Sox and Blue Fish (1989), a compilation of columns she wrote for The Boston Globe Sunday Magazine; Saturday Night (1990), a journal of essays which chronicle the Saturday nights she spent in communities across the country; and The Orchid Thief, (1999) a narrative about orchid poachers in Florida. The Orchid Thief has been made into the movie Adaptation, written by Charlie Kaufman and directed by Spike Jonze. In the film version of her book, Orlean was played, with some creative liberties, by Meryl Streep in a
Golden Globe Award-winning performance. Her most recent book, My Kind of Place: Travel Stories for a Woman Who’s Been Everywhere, takes readers on a world tour of subcultures - from the African music scene in Paris to the World Taxidermy Championships in Springfield, Ill. - in this witty collection of travel stories. Prior to joining The New Yorker, Orlean was a contributing editor at Rolling Stone and also at Vogue, where she wrote on numerous figures in both the music and fashion industries. Previously, she had been a columnist, first for The Boston Phoenix, and then for The Boston Globe Sunday Magazine. She has also written for The New York Times Magazine, Spy, Esquire and Outside. Orlean received her B.A. with honors from the University of Michigan in 1976. She lives in New York City with her husband, her son, Travis, and her dog, Cooper. Cooper Gillespie has just published his first book of recipes.

Paul Hendrickson’s bestseller, Sons of Mississippi, is the winner of the 2003 National Book Critics Circle Award, General Nonfiction, Winner, 2003 Chicago Tribune Heartland Prize for nonfiction, and finalist for the 2003 Southern Book Critics Circle Award in nonfiction. Karl Fleming of the Los Angeles Times called Sons of Mississippi "...a meticulously researched, exquisitely written and piercingly poignant book—the best I have ever read about that period and that place. ...a beautiful, poetic book about an ugly time in America's South. It's been a long time since I have been so moved." For more than 20 years, Hendrickson was a prize-winning feature writer for the Washington Post and for The National Observer. Hendrickson, who teaches nonfiction writing at the University of Pennsylvania, is the author of three previous books, two of them book award finalists: Looking for the Light (a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle Award) and The Living and the Dead: Robert McNamara and Five Lives of a Lost War (National Book Award finalist, The New York Times Notable Book of the Year, and Publisher's Weekly Best Books of the Year). His book, Bound for Glory: America in Color 1939-43, is a sort of photo-and-narrative documentary of the changing American psyche pre- and post-World War II. One reviewer said Bound for Glory “offers a window on a distant era in which grinding poverty and racial segregation coexist with the simple pleasures of rural and small-town life.” Hendrickson has been awarded various fellowships and numerous journalism honors and awards. In 1999 he was named a Guggenheim Foundation Fellow for his work on Sons of Mississippi. Partially educated in the South, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, in a seminary for the Catholic missionary priesthood, Hendrickson has degrees in American literature from Saint Louis University and Pennsylvania State University.

Alex Kotlowitz’s most recent book, Never a City So Real, was published July 2004 (Crown). The Chicago Sun-Times called it “a fine successor to Nelson Algren’s Chicago: City on the Make as a song to our rough-and-tumble, broken-nosed city…” Booklist wrote, “Kotlowitz is an omnivorous observer, discerning listener, and unassuming witness to urban life…. (Never a City So Real) is clear-eyed testimony to his great affection for this no-nonsense city and his infinite fascination with humankind.” The Chicago Tribune chose it as one of the top ten books of 2004. His previous book is The Other Side of the River: A Story of Two Towns, a Death and America’s Dilemma (Nan A. Talese/Doubleday.) The New York Times wrote: “Of all the many books written about race in America in the past couple of years, none has been quite like The Other Side of the River…It is the difference between the two towns, one white, one black, that anchors
this story, give it its soul, and makes it important, essential even, for the rest of us to contemplate.” The book received the Chicago Tribune’s Heartland Prize for Nonfiction and the Great Lakes Booksellers Award. He also is the author of the best-selling There Are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America. The book, which was published in 1991, was the recipient of numerous awards including the Helen B. Bernstein Award for Excellence in Journalism, the Carl Sandburg Award and a Christopher Award. The New York Public Library selected There Are No Children Here as one of the 150 most important books of the century. In the fall of 1993, it was adapted for television as an ABC Movie of the Week starring Oprah Winfrey. Kotlowitz contributes to The New York Times Magazine and public radio’s This American Life. His articles have also appeared in The New Yorker, the Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, Rolling Stone, The Atlantic and The New Republic. He has served as a correspondent and writer for a Frontline documentary, Let’s Get Married, and produces an annual series of personal narratives for Chicago Public Radio. He is a writer-in-residence at Northwestern University and a visiting professor at the University of Notre Dame as the Welch Chair in American Studies. He was a staff writer at The Wall Street Journal from 1984 to 1993, writing on urban affairs and social policy. Prior to joining the Journal, he freelanced for five years, contributing to The MacNeil-Lehrer NewsHour, National Public Radio’s All Things Considered and Morning Edition, as well as various magazines. His journalism honors include the George Foster Peabody Award, the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award, the George Polk Award and the Thurgood Marshall Award. He is also the recipient of three honorary degrees and the John LaFarge Memorial Award for Interracial Justice given by New York’s Catholic Interracial Council. A graduate of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Conn., Kotlowitz grew up in New York City. He lives with his family just outside Chicago.

Ken Wells is a novelist and longtime editor and feature writer for Page One of The Wall Street Journal, and currently editor of the Journal’s book-publishing division, a joint venture with Crown Publishers. Before his diversion into books, he ran a team of reporters who wrote exclusively for the paper’s front page on issues including race, immigration and the environment. Two of his reporters won Pulitzer Prizes, including the 1999 Pulitzer for feature writing. Wells’s own work has also appeared in Reader’s Digest and the Oxford American. Wells, who grew up in the bayous near Houma, La., is also the author of three well-received novels of Cajun Louisiana, known collectively as the Catahoula Bayou Trilogy. The debut book, Meely LaBauve, was published by Random House in 2000; Junior’s Leg followed in 2001; and Logan’s Storm was published in Sept. 2002. Wells is also the editor of two anthologies from The Wall Street Journal Books: Floating Off the Page, a collection of “Middle Column” features from the Journal’s front page, published in 2002, and Herd on the Street: Animal Stories From The Wall Street Journal, published in 2003. Wells has an English degree from Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, La., and a master’s degree from the University of Missouri School of Journalism. He began his journalism career as a reporter in 1967 covering car wrecks and gator sightings for the then-weekly Houma Courier, while still finding time to help out in his family’s snake-collecting business. He joined the Columbia Missourian in 1975 as a reporter and assistant editor. In 1978, he moved to The Miami Herald as a reporter. Four years later, he was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in the general reporting category for his coverage of how a massive, public-supported drainage project for agribusiness was greatly exacerbating a drought gripping the Florida Everglades. Wells joined The Wall Street Journal in 1982 as a reporter in the San
Francisco bureau, writing about topics as disparate as Utah polygamists and the Exxon-Valdez oil spill. He transferred to the London bureau in 1990 and was the Journal’s point man for coverage of the environmental aftermath of the Persian Gulf War and also helped cover South Africa’s transition to a multiracial democracy. He joined the Page One staff in 1993 and received the American Society of Newspaper Editors distinguished writing award for headline writing in 1994. He took a sabbatical from the Journal in 2002-2003 to tackle his first nonfiction book, a travelogue through the nation’s $75 billion beer industry called Travels with Barley: a Journey through Beer Culture in America. It was published by Simon & Schuster/Free Press in October 2004. When he is not busy with journalism or pecking away at novels, Wells plunks around on blues and jazz guitar, writes songs and often wishes he were fishing. He lives with his family on the outskirts of New York City. You can learn more about Wells, bayou country and Travels with Barley by visiting his website at www.bayoubro.com

Deanne Stillman’s book of literary nonfiction, Twentynine Palms: A True Story of Murder, Marines, and the Mojave, was published in spring 2001 by William Morrow; softcover in 2002. The conclusion of a 10-year journey, the book explores the brutal murders of two young girls in a scenic Southern California military town by a Marine shortly after the Persian Gulf War. With the desert as a main character, Stillman traces the family histories of the murder victims back for generations, in one case to the Donner Party and the other to a shack in the Philippines, and then, the inevitable and fatal arrival of each family in the Mojave. Her focus is the world of rootless kids who live in the shadows of a giant military base on the edge of the modern American frontier. Hunter Thompson calls Stillman’s book “a strange and brilliant story by an important American writer.” Praise has also come from writers such as Ron Rosenbaum, Lucian Truscott, Charles Bowden and Judith Freeman, as well as publications from the Washington Post to Maxim magazine to the Arizona Daily Star. Twentynine Palms was a Los Angeles Times bestseller and named one of the “best books of 2001” by the Los Angeles Times Book Review. It has been added to various college courses on literary nonfiction. Currently, Stillman is writing Horse Latitudes: Last Stand for the Wild Horse in the American West for Houghton Mifflin, a narrative nonfiction history of the wild horse in the West, with an account of the ongoing wars to wipe it out. In addition, Stillman is a widely published and anthologized writer. Her work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, The New York Times, Rolling Stone, New York Observer, Tin House and Slate. Her plays have won prizes in major theater festivals around the country. Originally from Ohio, Stillman has long been torn between two loves. For a while, she consorted with her first, New York. Then, she decided to explore the West Coast, whereupon she took up with Los Angeles and the beach and the desert and all the sand that it has to offer. Possibly the longest-running affair in town, it has continued for 18 years, through fire, earthquake and the thundering silence of phone calls gone unreturned. “I’ll never be the first to leave,” Stillman says.

Barry Newman has helped transform journalism into an art form on the front pages of The Wall Street Journal over the past 35 years. Many of his pieces are considered “classics” by editors and reporters alike. Newman went to work at the Journal’s New York office in 1970 after
apprenticeships at the *Albany Times-Union* and *The New York Times*. Moving to Singapore for the *Journal* in 1976, he covered South Asia, Southeast Asia, Australasia and the South Pacific and published a collection of light pieces, *East of the Equator*. Based in London in 1981, he spent the next five years covering Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey and Britain. For the next 11 years he covered Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union. Newman won the Overseas Press Club’s explanatory journalism prize in 1989 for articles on the collapse of communism. In 1997 he returned to New York where he continues to write offbeat features as well as serious pieces on immigration. He has also appeared recently in *Washington Monthly* and *American Scholar*. His stories have been collected in *The Literary Journalists* and in several of *The Wall Street Journal* books, including *Dressing for Dinner in the Naked City*, *Floating Off the Page* and *Herd on the Street: Animal Stories From The Wall Street Journal*, the latter two books edited by Ken Wells. Newman’s work is a form of offbeat, entertaining literary journalism at its finest.

**Cathy Booth Thomas** became the Dallas bureau chief of *TIME* magazine in September of 2000 after serving four years as Los Angeles bureau chief. She has covered everything from Hollywood to high tech, including Michael Dell of Dell Computers and Steve Jobs at both Apple and Pixar. Her celebrity interviews include profiles of Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, Tom Hanks, Russell Crowe and the Star Wars crew, as well as Paul McCartney, Stephen King and Gianni Versace. A 19-year veteran of *TIME*, she served as bureau chief for the magazine in Rome, Miami and Los Angeles before arriving back in her hometown of Dallas. During her six years as Miami bureau chief in the ‘90s, she interviewed Fidel Castro four times, twice for *TIME* covers. She has contributed to cover stories about a wide variety of topics, from battered wives (1983) to the challenges of taking care of an aging father who had Alzheimer's (1999)—a story that won her Clarion and National Headliners' awards in 2000. While in Rome, her work included traveling with the pope and covering the exodus of refugees from Iraq during the first Gulf War. Since arriving in Dallas, she has covered business issues, from the Enron bankruptcy and Andersen trial to the effects of Sept. 11 on Texas-based airline carriers. She has done profiles of Continental's Gordon Bethune, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban, Matt Rose of Burlington Northern and David Bonderman's Texas Pacific Group. A Texan, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Oklahoma in 1972 with a B.A. in journalism. She began her journalism career working for several small Texas and Oklahoma newspapers before joining United Press International in Dallas. During her 10-year stint with UPI, she covered everything from Mafia hits in New York to Palestinian fighters in Lebanon.

**Gary M. Lavergne**, author of *Bad Boy: The Murderous Life of Kenneth Allen McDuffis* and *A Sniper in the Tower: The Charles Whitman Murders*, about the man who climbed a tower at the University of Texas in 1966, shooting 45 people. Dan Rather of CBS says *Bad Boy* is, “impeccably researched, compellingly detailed...this is classic crime reporting." Lavergne is originally from the small Cajun community of Church Point, La. He has authored two true crime/criminal justice titles and has appeared on the Today Show, the History Channel, A&E, CNBC, MSNBC, the Discovery Channel and the Tokyo Broadcasting Company. He has also presented to numerous educational and law enforcement organizations on topics related to at-risk children and mass murder and violence in adults. He is currently the director of admissions research at the University of Texas at Austin. He lives in Cedar Park, Texas.

Bill Marvel is a senior feature writer at *The Dallas Morning News*, specializing in narratives. During his 18 years at the *News*, he has ridden shotgun with tornado chasers in West Texas, visited a remote Mexico village with a Dallas family searching for their roots, hung out with a wounded gang member struggling with blindness, watched a cartoonist for *The New Yorker* at work and driven a Porsche 120 miles an hour in backwoods Arkansas. Before the *News*, he covered art and architecture for *The Dallas Times Herald*, was art and off-off-Broadway theater critic for *The National Observer*, and covered night cops, day cops, the courts, city hall and the Colorado statehouse for Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*. From time to time, Marvel has dropped out of writing to edit, a career move he has almost always come to regret. He has free-lanced for *Smithsonian*, *Horizon*, *Southwest Spirit* and *American Way* and is the author of several coffee-table books on railroads. He is currently finishing a narrative history of the Ludlow Massacre, one of the most violent episodes of labor warfare in American history.

**Conference Planners**

Dr. Mitchell Land, director of the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, has spearheaded a number of innovative projects over the years designed to provide graduate students at the Mayborn Institute the know-how to succeed in virtually every field of journalism and publishing. His latest initiative, the Mayborn Literary Nonfiction Writers Conference of the Southwest, is a project born of high ambition: to provide students, educators, readers and writers throughout the Southwest region instruction in emerging forms of literary narration from the nation’s leading practitioners. Land’s latest literary initiative, as well as many other innovative programs in journalism, is supported by the Frank W. and Sue Mayborn Foundation. Since 1999, the Mayborn Institute has awarded more than $1 million in scholarships to graduate students who intend to go into the news business. In addition to his scholarship and service, Land represents the university throughout sub-Saharan Africa to establish relationships between UNT and universities there. His fast-track journalism-training program in Mozambique was pivotal in the establishment of the first college of communication arts at Eduardo Mondlane University in Maputo. The African initiative also brought prominent Nigerians to the campus for intensive training in fall 2001. Land also won a Charn Uswachoke grant in June 2001 for the Mozambique effort. Land’s extensive research, especially in Africa, has been widely published in journals, textbooks and one media encyclopedia. His co-edited book on media ethics will be published in spring 2005. Land holds degrees in French, journalism, divinity and earned his Ph.D. at the University of Texas at Austin in international/development communication. Under Land’s leadership, graduate student enrollment has doubled since 1999.
George Getschow is the conference writer-in-residence. He designed the conference format and worked closely with the writers and editors on the lectures, workshops and panel discussions. As a part of the Mayborn Nonfiction Initiative, he will teach a special three-week literary nonfiction course in Archer City, Texas, preceding the conference. The course is designed for students in journalism and English who want to further study and practice the art of factual narration while earning undergraduate- or graduate-level credit. Students will reside at the Spur Hotel, where classes will be held Monday through Thursday. Getschow, the writing coach for scholars at the Mayborn Institute, worked for 16 years in various bureaus of The Wall Street Journal, including Chicago, Pittsburgh, Dallas and Houston. He also covered Mexico for two years and worked briefly in New York as a rewrite editor for the Journal’s in-depth, front-page feature stories. As bureau chief in Houston and later Dallas, he directed the paper’s economic, social and cultural coverage of the Southwest. A primary responsibility was training reporters in the art and craft of writing literary nonfiction narratives – that is, the type of stories that appear on the front page of The Wall Street Journal each day. Getschow has received a number of national writing awards, including runner-up for the Pulitzer Prize for national reporting, The Robert F. Kennedy Award for distinguished writing about the underprivileged and The National Council for the Advancement of Education Writing (NCAEW), first place for best feature series. He has a Master of Fine Arts degree in creative nonfiction writing. He is completing a literary nonfiction book for New York publisher Henry Holt. The Kingdom grew out of a series of stories he wrote for The Wall Street Journal.
Conference Program Schedule

Friday, July 22, 2005

11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Registration: Hilton Lobby

5:30 p.m. to 7:15 p.m.

Austin Ranch Reception
(Next Door to the Hilton)

Kick up your heels at the Austin Ranch for a reception to welcome Susan Orlean, Norm Pearlstine, Paul Hendrickson, Alex Kotlowitz, Ken Wells, Deanne Stillman, Barry Newman, Cathy Booth Thomas, Gary Lavergne, William Harper, Bill Marvel and all of our conference writers and editors who will be arriving at the Austin Ranch from all around the country. Grab a beer and dig into a plate of tangy Texas barbecue. All conferees are required to greet one another with a warm “howdy” and to two-step to the rhythm of our down-home country music. Sue Mayborn, honorary publisher of the conference, and Mitch Land, director of the Mayborn Graduate Institute of Journalism, will open the conference and welcome our writers and guests.

7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Keynote Address: Susan Orlean at Hilton DFW Lakes
(Ballroom)

Session Open to the Public

$25 admission

Susan Orlean Takes Us Deep Into Her Witty World of Travel Writing and Other Adventures
Be on hand as Susan Orlean takes us on a guided literary tour of the World Taxidermy Championships in Springfield, Ill., and even into her own apartment, where she imagines a very famous houseguest taking advantage of her hospitality. On this literary tour, you will climb Mount Fuji and experience a hike most intrepid Japanese have never attempted. You will play ball with Little Leaguers in Cuba, a country where baseball and politics are inextricably intertwined. You will trawl Icelandic waters with Keiko, everyone’s favorite whale as he tries to make it on his own. You will visit Midland, Texas, hometown of George W. Bush, a place where oil time is the only time that matters. You will explore the halls of a New York City school so troubled it’s known as “Horror High”; and stalk caged tigers in Jackson, N.J., a suburban town with one of the highest concentrations of tigers per square mile anywhere in the world. All of these adventures will be narrated by the author herself, Susan Orlean, one of the most captivating voices in literary journalism today.

8:35 p.m. to 9 p.m.

**Got Questions? Susan Orlean Will Be Glad to Answer Them**

Question and answer session with Susan Orlean. Time to ask Susan anything you want about her decade-long career at *The New Yorker*, about her literary nonfiction books, about whether she thinks Meryl Streep got Orlean’s character right in the film *Adaptation*. We certainly hope someone will ask Susan why she named her son after a famous Texan at the Alamo.

9:10 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

**Book Signing**
*(Lobby Outside the Main Ballroom)*

Susan will have her best pen at the ready to sign her latest literary nonfiction book, *My Kind of Place: Travel Stories for a Woman Who’s Been Everywhere*, as well as *The Orchid Thief* and other books. She’s looking forward to meeting her fans face to face.

9:45 p.m. ‘til the tap runs dry

**Chit-Chat Time with the Conference’s Night Owls**

Saddle up at the piano bar, the lounge or any chair you can find, grab an author and talk his or her ears off. But beware; you’ve got a busy day tomorrow.
Saturday, July 23, 2005

7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m.

**Late Registration**

9 a.m. to 9:55 a.m.

**Barry Newman Plenary Session**
*(Ballroom)*

"Writing the Weirdest Stories in the World"

Barry will talk about how he comes up with the weird ideas for his literary nonfiction pieces, especially those that have been memorialized as classics in *Floating Off the Page* and *Animal Stories from The Wall Street Journal*. Barry finds his whimsical, offbeat, bizarre pieces outside the public’s view, nestled in some of the remotest parts in the world. Of course, finding these stories is one thing. Telling them with his flair and style is another thing. Barry will share some of his trade secrets.

10 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

**If You Like, Barry Can Talk About Barry**

Barry has traveled all over the world in search of strange stories. So we expect that this will be a wide-ranging question and answer session. Time to ask Barry about aspects of storytelling that you had hoped he would have addressed in his plenary session, but he instead spent most of his time talking about how handsome and intelligent he is compared to other narrative storytellers at *The Wall Street Journal*.

11 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

**Plenary Session with Alex Kotlowitz**
*(Ballroom)*

The author of *There Are No Children Here* and *The Other Side of the River* will address how to tell the stories of people outside the public eye, the people that are often overlooked by the mainstream media. These are the people on the margins of America, either because of their race or poverty or their legal status. Alex has made a literary career out of writing about such people and believes that writers with an eye on the periphery of America will be able to find amazing
stories as well. We strongly encourage you to read Alex’s literary nonfiction books before coming to this session.

Noon to 12:50 p.m.

Ever Dream You’d Get the Chance to Grill One of the Nation’s Most Prominent Journalists? Well, Now You Can.

Now’s your chance to ask Alex personal questions like: “Alex, did all the literary acclaim you received from the publication of your first nonfiction book, There Are No Children Here, turn you into a snob? Do you insist that your wife iron your underwear? Do you still read The Wall Street Journal even though your byline doesn’t adorn the Grey Lady’s front page anymore?

1 p.m. to 1:50 p.m.

Box Lunch and Readings
(Ballroom)

Ken Wells, Paul Hendrickson, Alex Kotlowitz, Deanne Stillman, Barry Newman, Gary M. Lavergne, Cathy Booth Thomas, William T. Harper, Bill Marvel and other conference writers will read from their latest nonfiction books or articles.

2 p.m. to 5:10 p.m.

Workshop Sessions
(Please Go to Your Designated Workshop Room)

2 p.m. to 2:55 p.m.

Plenary Session with Deanne Stillman
(Ballroom)

“The Role of Landscape in Shaping Literary Narratives”
Deanne Stillman has much to tell you about “The Role of Landscape in Shaping Literary Narratives.” The author of Twentynine Palms is working on another narrative nonfiction book, Horse Latitudes: Last Stand for the Wild Horse in the American West for Houghton Mifflin, a history of the wild horse in the West and the ongoing wars to wipe it out. Deanne is the ideal author to talk about how landscape and place play an all-important role in storytelling, which is so often neglected by journalists and writers of literary narratives. In Deanne’s literary magazine pieces and books, landscape and place serve not just as setting for her stories but as a kind of living character. Deanne will explain why landscape and place are so important in story development and how writers must understand landscape if they are going to understand the characters who inhabit it.

3 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

**Deanne Stillman Stands on the Firing Line**

The Mojave Desert has shaped and defined Deanne as much as it’s shaped and defined her narratives. This helps explain how she’s become one of the nation’s most skilled craftsmen of writing about place as character. How does she do it? Time to ask Deanne to divulge her trade secrets.

**Coffee Break**

4:05 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**Plenary Session with Paul Hendrickson**
(Ballroom)

“How Book Projects Find Us, Not We Them”

Paul will discuss “How Book Projects Find Us, Not We Them.” In Paul’s case, the stories he finds often are inspired by something photographic that he’s encountered in everyday life. Paul will explain how this was the case in discovering the Sons of Mississippi: A Story of Race and Its Legacy. Paul’s book has won numerous awards, including the 2003 national Book Critics Circle Award, General Nonfiction.

5:05 p.m. to 5:50 p.m.

**Forsaking the Priestly Cloak for the Pen**
Question and answer session with Paul Hendrickson. Paul spent seven years in a Catholic seminary. Wonder if this experience shaped his writing life? Time to ask him.

6 p.m. to 6:50 p.m.

*Literary Lights Reception*

*(Ballroom)*

At this special dinner reception, our conference will recognize the highest-quality submissions of literary nonfiction with several special awards presented by the conference’s honorary publisher, Sue Mayborn: First Place, The Norm Pearlstine Award for Literary Nonfiction ($3,000), Second Place, The Ken Wells Award for Literary Nonfiction ($2,000) and Third place, The Alex Kotlowitz Award for Literary Nonfiction ($1,000). The winner of the manuscript submission will also be announced at the reception. The winner will enter into a provisional contract with UNT Press to publish his or her manuscript. Each winner will have five minutes to read excerpts of their literary nonfiction work and will dine with our conference writers and editors.

7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

*Keynote Address: Time Inc.’s Editor-in-chief*

Norman Pearlstine

*(Ballroom)*

Norm Pearlstine is editor-in-chief of Time Inc., the world’s largest magazine publisher. Norm oversees the editorial content of Time Inc.'s numerous magazines, including *TIME, Life, Fortune, Sports Illustrated, People, In Style, Money* and *Entertainment Weekly*, to name a few. In addition to his editorial duties, Norm is responsible for Time Inc.'s new media, international and television activities. Prior to joining Time Inc., Norm was the managing editor of *The Wall Street Journal*. He also previously served as an executive editor at *Forbes* magazine. Consequently, there are few editors in American journalism today better suited to address “The Future of Literary Journalism in the America.”

8:05 p.m. to 9 p.m.

*We’re Putting the Editor on the Other Side of the Table*

Time to Grill the Editor-in-Chief of Time Inc.

You’ll get to follow up on some of the points Norm addressed in his plenary session, as well as any other issue concerning the ever-changing landscape of journalism. It will be a rare opportunity for you to speak directly to the top editor of the nation’s leading magazine publisher.
Norm’s ties to Texas run deep; some years ago, he was on the verge of becoming a champion bullrider in Houston – until a mangled thumb put an end to his ambitions.

9:10 p.m. to 9:45 p.m.

**Book Signings**
*(Lobby Outside the Ballroom)*

Book signings with all conference authors. Make sure you purchase the authors’ books at the conference bookstore. Take advantage of this opportunity to speak to the authors, one on one, as they sign your favorite book.

9:50 p.m. ‘til the hoot owls go to bed

**Time for Like-Minded Writers to Share Their Thoughts About Literary Narration**

Sit down with someone you met at the conference and talk about those ideas that have been percolating in your head about a literary nonfiction narrative that you’ve suddenly decided to write. Maybe your newspaper editor has rejected the idea as “stale and stupid.” But he may not have looked at it as a literary nonfiction writer might. Perhaps you’ll find people at the conference that will agree that you’ve got the makings of a narrative page-turner on your hands. It’s time to float those ideas among like-minded writers.
Sunday, July 26, 2005

8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Revision Workshops

You should come away from the first workshop feelings like you have received valuable ideas for reshaping and rewriting your literary nonfiction narratives. During today’s Workshops [The Article/Essay Workshops and the Manuscript Workshops], each member of the workshop will read a one-page revision of their original work critiqued the day before. The idea is to demonstrate that the writer understands the workshop’s critique and is responsive to it. After the revised material is read, other members of the workshop will respond to the revised work.

9 a.m. to 9:50 a.m.

Plenary session with Gary M. Lavergne
(Ballroom)

“The Art of Telling True-Crime Stories”

Grisly murders and mayhem happen everyday, but it takes a storyteller to recognize when these crimes are candidates for literary narration. Gary Lavergne, the author of Bad Boy: The Murderous Life of Kenneth Allen McDuffis and A Sniper in the Tower: The Charles Whitman Murders, will explain the art of writing true-crime narratives.

9:55 a.m. to 10:50 a.m.

Time to Talk to a True-Crime Writer About Murder and Madness

How do you identify a true crime story worthy of narrative treatment? Why is one grisly murder worthy of book treatment and another not? Journalists and writers have to ask themselves these questions in considering whether to pitch a crime story to a publisher. Gary Lavergne certainly has done that, and he’ll be on hand to answer your questions about anything on your mind having to do with true crime and criminal justice stories.

11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Plenary Session with Cathy Booth Thomas
(Ballroom)

“How to Get Celebrities to Tell All”
Cathy Booth Thomas is one of journalism’s stars in conducting celebrity interviews. During her 19 years at TIME, Cathy has landed celebrity interviews with Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman, Tom Hanks, Russell Crowe and the Star Wars crew. She’s also hooked Paul McCartney, Stephen King and Gianni Versace, none of whom were easy bait. Cathy has learned a trick or two about getting celebrities to open up. She even interviewed Fidel Castro four times, twice for TIME covers, getting him to say things he probably wouldn’t tell his wife. Hear how she does it.

11:35 a.m. to 11:50 a.m.

Cathy Booth Thomas Takes Your Questions

What’s it like to sit face to face with your favorite Hollywood star? Cathy Booth Thomas, the Dallas bureau chief of TIME, has probably sat down with yours. You can ask her all about it.

Noon to 1 p.m.

Keynote address: Ken Wells
(Ballroom)

A plenary session by noted writer and book publisher Ken Wells, covering his personal journey in literary nonfiction in particular and new developments in publishing literary nonfiction in general. Among other things, Ken will talk about the nonfiction literary pact between The Wall Street Journal and Crown Publishing.

1:05 p.m. to 1:50 p.m.

What Can A Cajun Tell Us About Beer and Alligators?
Ask Ken Wells

A freewheeling question and answer session with Ken Wells covering any literary nonfiction aspect under the sun, from generating ideas, to research, to the writing process, to publishing. Ken also knows a lot about alligators, crawfish and jambalaya since he hails from the bayous of Southern Louisiana. And despite his literary credentials, he still talks like a Cajun fur trapper.

2 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.

The Writing Process: Panel Discussion with Conference Authors
(Ballroom)
Our conference authors will be rounded up to talk about the writing process. Do they come up with their own ideas for literary nonfiction books, or do their editors give them subjects to write about? How do they get themselves motivated to write? Do they write on a word processor or long hand on a notepad? Do they keep journals, and does their journal writing help them deal with blocks in their writing? How often do they revise their work? Is the revision process a fundamental part of writing? Do they ever get it just perfect the first time they put their pen to paper? Who are their favorite authors? Who are their least favorite authors? Is reading the work of great authors important for anyone who wants to become a full-time writer? What authors have helped them the most in becoming better writers? Who are their role models?

3 p.m. to 3:15 p.m.

**Farewell Address by Dr. Mitch Land**  
*(Ballroom)*

Dr. Mitch Land, director of the Mayborn Institute, will give a farewell address and invite conferees to return to our next conference in 2006. We close the conference with the expectation that our conferees will put into practice what they have learned about the art of factual narration. And we count on our conferees to become tomorrow’s finest storytellers.

3:20 p.m. to 3:45 p.m.

**Book Signing**  
*(Lobby Outside the Main Ballroom)*

All the authors will make themselves available for book signings. This will be your last opportunity before the close of the conference.